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# Youth Development Bureau

STATE DOCUMENTS

*Our History --  
What We Do --  
Programs --*

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*"Every child that is not a creative,  
self-expressive individual who loves to  
learn, has not had the opportunity."*

-- Toby Moffat

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*"Once a youth is stamped delinquent  
or troublesome, the community responds to  
him in a negative way. The young person  
so-labeled may also begin to perceive  
himself as 'bad,' and act accordingly."*

-- HEW Pamphlet on Delinquency

MONTANA STATE  
930 East Lyndale Avenue  
Helena, Montana 59601

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The Youth Development Bureau staff has prepared this publication to give the public a general idea of what the Bureau is and what we do in Montana communities.

If you have any questions and would like further information concerning the Youth Development Bureau, please contact Shirley M. Miller, Bureau Chief, P.O. Box 1723, Helena, Montana 59601, or call 406/449-3724.

The Youth Development Bureau is part of the Community Services Division of Montana's Social and Rehabilitation Services.



## OUR HISTORY

In 1971, the Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Administration funded 22 model programs nationally to help young people by focusing on their successes rather than on their delinquent acts. Twenty-one of these 22 projects were in urban centers, with but one set up as a model program for rural delinquency prevention and youth development.

Montana was chosen as the model because of its willingness to accept an untried demonstration program and its interest in delivering quality services to young Montanans through a Youth Services System. This system is a coordinated, cooperative effort by youth-serving agencies to deliver improved services to their clients.

The Rural America Project, as it was first called, began operation with workers in five Montana communities - Lewistown, Shelby, Glendive, Wolf Point and Polson. In 1972, the project received a federal mandate to regionalize operations and move to the larger Montana communities. The Rural America Project became the Youth Development Bureau. The Youth Development Workers were moved to Billings, Great Falls, Missoula and Helena, with Shelby retaining its position. Wolf Point continued operation on a part-time

basis and later Butte/Anaconda was added as a Youth Development location. Just recently a Youth Development Worker was added at the state level to serve those communities that do not have access to the Bureau's staff locally.

In 1973, through Executive Reorganization, the Youth Development Bureau became a part of the Community Services Division of the Montana Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. In October, 1974, the Montana Advisory Council on Children and Youth (MACCY) Unit became assigned administratively to the Youth Development Bureau.



## WHAT WE DO

The task of the Youth Development Worker in each community is to further improve the local Youth Services System through consultation, program development and community organization. A Youth Services System is a cooperative endeavor by all youth-serving agencies in the community through which better programs can be initiated to help young

people. Using this coordinated effort, agencies can do more for adolescents than they can by using an isolated, single-agency approach.

The Youth Development Bureau participates in the design and implementation of programs planned and developed by the communities with the assistance of Bureau staff. The staff efforts are aimed at promoting a strategy for delinquency prevention. This is accomplished by: 1) designing programs to prevent youngsters from receiving inappropriate and premature labels - if a youngster is called "delinquent" or "slow" or "troublesome" long enough, he comes to regard himself in that way; 2) increasing the teenagers' opportunities for rewarding roles that are accepted by the rest of the community, and 3) planning programs designed to give all youngsters, not just those in trouble, a feeling of self-worth and self-esteem. These programs are intended to show young people and adults that they can work together for common goals.

Financially, the Youth Development Bureau has required at least 25% match money from the community to ensure local commitment for programs. The Bureau does not want to start programs which will die when state or federal dollars no longer support it, but instead develops programs which the community accepts and supports. Bureau funding is planned so that it gradually decreases, while community funding for the program increases.

It should be noted that the Bureau

does not work directly with youth, but with the agencies that provide services to youth. The Bureau's main goal is to improve services to young people through the agencies' participation in the Youth Services System.



## PROGRAMS

The Youth Development Worker helps the local community create and find funding for a wide variety of programs designed to help young people. Examples of these programs include:

- \* alternative schools which operate in cooperation with the local school system
- \* community recreation programs
- \* short-term "Attention Homes" for youngsters who might otherwise be sent to jail
- \* youth centers



- \* summer camps designed to increase a young person's self-concept
- \* teacher in-service training
- \* summer education
- \* drug abuse seminars
- \* training for youth programs' staffs and boards of directors
- \* youth employment programs
- \* assistance to Montana Advisory Council on Children and Youth members
- \* intensive counseling projects
- \* summer recreation
- \* Parent Effectiveness Training
- \* assistance on health education programs







